CLAIMS

1.   A method, comprising:

establishing an extensible list of attributes of various information resources in an information system, wherein each information resource can be classified according to one or more attributes;

establishing an extensible list of values for the attributes in the extensible list of attributes, wherein each value is associated in the list with its corresponding attribute; and

selecting a first set of one or more of the values from the extensible list of values to be a first set of target criteria to designate a subset of the information resources.

2.   The method as recited in claim 1, further comprising:

assigning a priority weight to each of the attributes in the list of attributes; and

adding the priority weights of each attribute associated with a value in the first set of target criteria to obtain a priority sum for the first set of target criteria.

3.   The method as recited in claim 2, further comprising selecting additional sets of target criteria to designate a spectrum of subsets of the information resources, wherein a priority sum of each additional set of target criteria is compared to the priority sum of the first set of target criteria to determine whether a particular one of the additional sets of target criteria

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designates a more general or a more specific subset of information resources than designated by the first set of target criteria.

4.   The method as recited in claim 3, wherein each information resource includes one or more content elements and each content element can be classified according to one or more attributes.

5.   The method as recited in claim 4, wherein each resource and each content element in each resource is linked with a set of target criteria and if a resource is designated as a member of a subset by a set of target criteria then priority sums of each respective set of target criteria linked to each content element in the resource are compared to the priority sum of the set of target criteria linked to the resource to rank the content elements in the resource according to similarity with the priority sum of the set of target criteria linked to the resource.

6.   The method as recited in claim 5, further comprising localizing information resources and content elements in the information system for a user of the information system by presenting the user with one or more of the subsets of the information resources designated by one or more of the first set of target criteria and the additional sets of target criteria.

7.   The method as recited in claim 1, wherein a database structure of the information system remains unchanged during expansion and contraction of the extensible list of attributes and the extensible list of values.

8.   The method as recited in claim 7, further comprising adding attributes to the extensible list of attributes.

9.   The method as recited in claim 8, further comprising adding values associated with the added attributes to the extensible list of values.

10.   The method as recited in claim 9, further comprising selecting a set of values including one or more of the added attributes to designate a subset of the information resources with greater specificity.

11.   The method as recited in claim 1, wherein each value of each attribute of each information resource is included in the extensible list of values.

12.   A data structure, comprising:

an extensible table of attributes, wherein various content elements in an information system possess values of the attributes and wherein each attribute in the extensible table of attributes is associated with a priority weight;

an extensible table of values of the attributes, wherein each value is associated with its corresponding attribute; and

a set of one or more of the values to designate a subset of the content elements, wherein a priority weight of each attribute associated with each value in the set is summed to determine a priority sum of the set.

13. The data structure as recited in claim 12, further comprising multiple sets of one or more values to designate multiple subsets of the content elements, wherein priority sums of respective sets in the multiple sets can be compared to determine similarities and differences between subsets of content elements designated by the multiple sets.

14. The data structure as recited in claim 13, further comprising a list of the multiple sets, wherein the list of multiple sets is arranged according to a numerical order of the respective priority sums of sets in the multiple sets.

15. A content management engine, comprising:

a classification engine to determine attributes of information resources in an information system;

an attribute table manager in communication with a dynamic table of attributes and priorities;

a prioritizer to assign priority weights to each attribute in the attribute table;

a values table manager in communication with a dynamic table of values, wherein each value and its associated attribute possessed by one of the information resources is represented in the values table;

a target criteria engine to create target criteria sets of one or more of the values, wherein a target criteria set designates a subset of the information resources in the information system based on the one or more values; and

a localization engine to make information resources in the subset available to a user of the information system.

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16.   The content management engine as recited in claim 15, further comprising a target criteria set comparator to compare a priority sum of a first target criteria set to a priority sum of a second target criteria set, wherein a priority sum is the sum of the priority weights of the values in a given target criteria set.

17.   The content management engine as recited in claim 16, wherein the target criteria sets are stored by the content management engine.

18.   The content management engine as recited in claim 17, wherein the target criteria sets are ranked according to their respective priority sums.

19.   The content management engine as recited in claim 17, wherein the target criteria set comparator compares a priority sum of a target criteria set requested by a user to a priority sum of a stored target criteria set.

20.   The content management engine as recited in claim 15, further comprising a target criteria set link module to link a preferred target criteria set to each information resource and each content element included in each information resource.

21.   The content management engine as recited in claim 20, further comprising a content ranking module to compare a priority sum of each preferred target criteria set linked to content elements included in an information resource to the priority sum of the target criteria set linked to the information resource and rank the content elements according to a comparison result.

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22.   One or more computer readable media containing instructions that are executable by a computer to perform actions, comprising:

associating priority weight values with attributes in a dynamic list of attributes associated with information resources in an information system;

associating instances of attribute values with corresponding attributes in a dynamic list of attribute values;

designating subsets of the information resources based on sets of one or more of the attribute values;

comparing the sets of one or more attribute values according to respective priority sums, wherein a priority sum is obtained by summing priority weight values associated with each attribute value in a set of one or more of the attribute values.

23.   The one or more computer readable media as recited in claim 22, wherein each information resource includes one or more content elements possessing one or more of the attributes.

24.   The one or more computer readable media as recited in claim 23, further comprising instructions to link each information resource and each content element in each information resource with a set of one or more of the attribute values and if an information resource is designated as a member of a subset by a set of one or more of the attribute values then to rank each content element in an information resource according to a difference between a priority sum of a set of one or more of the attribute values linked to the content element and a priority sum

of a set of one or more of the attribute values linked to the information resource, wherein a priority sum is a sum of each priority weight value of each attribute associated with each attribute value in a set of one or more attribute values.

25.   The one or more computer readable media as recited in claim 24, further comprising instructions to localize information resources and content elements in the information system for a user of the information system by providing an interface between the user and one or more of the subsets of the information resources and content elements of each information resource in the one or more subsets.

26.   The one or more computer readable media as recited in claim 22, further comprising instructions to add attributes to the dynamic list of attributes.

27.   The one or more computer readable media as recited in claim 26, further comprising instructions to add attribute values associated with the added attributes to the dynamic list of attribute values.

28.   An information system, comprising:

information resources having attributes;

an extensible table of the attributes, wherein each attribute is assigned a weight;

an extensible table of values for the attributes, wherein each value is associated with its corresponding attribute;

sets of the values, wherein each set specifies a subset of the information resources and each set can be differentiated by the sum of the weights of each attribute represented by a value in each set.

29.   The information system as recited in claim 28, wherein the extensible table of the attributes and the extensible table of values can be expanded without changing a database structure of the information system.

30   The information system as recited in claim 28, wherein each information resource includes various content elements.

31.   The information system as recited in claim 30, wherein an information resource and each content element is associated with a preferred set of values for specifying a subset of information resources that includes the information resource or the content element.

32.   The information system as recited in claim 31, wherein a content element included in an information resource is ranked relative to other content elements in the information resource according to a magnitude of a difference between a priority sum associated with the content element and a priority sum associated with the information resource, wherein a priority sum is a sum of weights of each attribute represented by a value in the preferred set of values associated with each information resource and each content element.